DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 458 827 FL 801 465

AUTHOR	Sample, Barbara
TITLE	Identifying Skills and Personal Qualities. Scans Plans Portfolio.
INSTITUTION	Spring Inst. for International Studies, Denver, CO.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Refugee Resettlement (DHHS), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	4p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.springinstitute.com/elt/pdf/scansidn.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Education; Class Activities; Classroom Techniques; Employment Interviews; *English (Second Language); Immigrants; Lesson Plans; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning

ABSTRACT

This paper is designed to build interpersonal, basic, and thinking skills so that students will become better able to answer basic questions about themselves (such as name, job title, job skills, personal qualities) in response to basic and general questions likely to be encountered in the course of seeking employment. Students are configured in small groups or pairs and given pictures of occupations, skills, and tools. Students learn to explain in English what their job skills are, what they can do, and why they should be hired. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education) (KFT)

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ELT
Technical Assistance for
English Language Training Projects
1997-1998
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SCANS PLANS PORTFOLIO

Identifying Skills and Personal Qualities

by Barbara Sample, Spring Institute for International Studies

Level: Low level to Multi-level

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Performance Outcomes:
1. Students will identify and state their job title and job skills based on pictures of these activities.
2. Students will state their personal qualities.
3. Students will answer questions about their skills and personal qualities when asked questions like "Tell me about yourself." "What are your skills for this job?" "Why should I hire you?" "What are your strong points?"

Communication teaching points: Answering questions, simple present with Be and Can.

SCANS Competencies:
Interpersonal Skills: working well with people from diverse cultures
Basic Skills: speaking, listening
Thinking Skills: thinking creatively, reasoning
Personal Qualities: individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, integrity

Classroom configurations: Class, pairs or small groups

Materials: Pictures of occupations, skills, and tools

Procedure:

1. Start with skills first. Use a variety of pictures to elicit responses which indicate what people can do. (In addition to photos and magazines, there are a number of sources of pictures which illustrate job titles and skills, for example the Basic Oxford Picture Dictionary Literacy Program, which can be reproduced, and picture dictionaries. See attached examples.) Display the pictures and have students select the ones which show their job or skills. (We often have students take a copy of the picture so they can hold it up when they say what they can do.)

2. Teach the words for the skills and jobs your students can do by saying the words as you point to the pictures such as *gardener* or *mechanic* or *housekeeper* and *cut grass* or *fix cars* or *clean*. Have students repeat these words in the pattern, "I am *a gardener / an auto mechanic / a housekeeper*." and "I can *cut grass / fix cars / clean*."

Write the words in two lists on a flip chart sheet under the headings JOB TITLE and SKILL as reinforcement for your literate students and as site vocabulary for your illiterate students. They will see these words again on many job applications. Expand the list of jobs and skills each day by adding words linked to picture meanings.

3. Ask the question, "What can you do?" Have students hold up pictures and say their job title and at least one skill following the patterns they have learned. Have them ask and answer each other in pairs. Finally have them copy the words so that they can use them in future applications.

4. To illustrate personal qualities for success on the job, act out short skits. Enlist the help of another teacher to contrast *patient, impatient; honest, dishonest, punctual, late; neat, messy; hard working, lazy.* After each skit, have students identify the personal qualities that are true about them, and use them in sentences like, "I am *patient*." Again write the words for positive qualities on a flip chart page and add to the list each day. Have people practice responding to questions they are likely to get in an interview. The question about positive qualities will come in a variety of forms: "What are your strong points?" "What kind of worker are you?" "What are your strengths?" as well as "What are your positive qualities?"-

Acknowledge that American culture includes saying good things about yourself. It is not considered rude if it is said in a sincere, not proud or aggressive way. It is possible to act out these two behaviors (sincere versus proud or aggressive) to illustrate their meaning.

5. Combine skills and qualities. Say "Tell me about yourself". Have students tell you their previous job experience, skills, and personal qualities. For example, "I am a repair person. I can fix TVs, radios, and cassette recorders. I am patient, careful, and dependable."

As people talk about themselves, write their "stories" like a language experience story. This story will help them read, provide a model for filling in application forms, and be a practice sheet for the interviews.